

**CLAIMS**

1. A method for estimating ink usage of a print job, comprising:  
connecting a computer peripheral device to a host computer  
having predefined information relating to the peripheral device; and  
5 offering pricing and estimation of ink and image consumables  
for completing the print job, before the print job is performed.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the host computer is linked to a  
generic printer driver located on the host computer.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the host computer is linked to a  
remote printer driver in a server system.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the server supplies information  
pertaining to a number of instrumented drivers and printers to the host  
computer.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the remote server is linked to  
the host computer via at least one of the Internet or a local intranet.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining printing  
parameters for choosing a print option that best fits budgetary and printing  
requirements of the print job.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the printing parameters includes  
at least one of print quantity, print quality, print type and paper type.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the printing parameters are  
ascertained by a remote printer driver and forwarded to a server.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the printing parameters are  
incorporated by the server in data files to be used by various combinations of

instrumented drivers and printers located on the server and shared by other printers connected to the server.

10. A method for analyzing ink usage for a printer, comprising:  
communicating a type of ink cartridge and ink reservoir system  
to a host computer as part of a print job submission;  
estimating the ink to be used in a print job based on predefined  
printing requirements; and  
determining the number of print swaths and pages the ink  
cartridge can complete based on ink available in the ink reservoir system.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising relaying to the  
determined information to a user.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising providing the user  
with a plurality of options, including allowing the print job to proceed, choosing  
an alternative printing system, and ordering ink consumables for the printer.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising offering the user  
upgrade options, including ordering a generic stand alone printer driver and a  
server printer driver.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising providing the user  
with a hyperlink via the Internet to a supplier of the printer for automatic  
ordering of the ink consumables.

15. An ink usage monitoring system for estimating ink usage of a  
print job, comprising:  
a computer peripheral device for performing the print job; and  
a host computer connected to the computer peripheral device  
and having predefined information relating to the peripheral device, wherein

the host computer has pricing and estimation of ink and image consumables for completing the print job, before the print job is performed.

5           16.    The ink usage monitoring system of claim 15, further comprising a remote printer driver located on a server that is connected to the host computer.

10           17.    The ink usage monitoring system of claim 16, wherein the server supplies information pertaining to a number of instrumented drivers and printers to the host computer.

15           18.    The ink usage monitoring system of claim 17, wherein the remote printer driver includes at least one of firmware and software that determines printing parameters for choosing a print option that best fits budgetary and printing requirements of the print job.

20           19.    The ink usage monitoring system of claim 18, wherein the printing parameters includes at least one of print quantity, print quality, print type and paper type.

25           20.    The ink usage monitoring system of claim 18, wherein the printing parameters are ascertained by the remote printer driver and forwarded to the server that is connected to the host computer.

30           21.    An ink usage monitoring system for estimating ink usage of a print job, comprising:

              means for connecting a computer peripheral device to a host computer having predefined information relating to the peripheral device; and

              means for offering pricing and estimation of ink and image consumables for completing the print job, before the print job is performed.

22. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 21, wherein the host computer is linked to a generic printer driver located on the host computer.

23. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 22, wherein the host computer is linked to a remote printer driver in a server system.

24. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 23, wherein the server supplies information pertaining to a number of instrumented drivers and printers to the host computer.

25. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 23, wherein the remote server is linked to the host computer via at least one of the Internet or a local intranet.

26. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 21, further comprising means for determining printing parameters for choosing a print option that best fits budgetary and printing requirements of the print job.